IN 7 MONTHS ... TIME RUNS OUT!

NEW AVENGERS®

HICKMAN
WALKER
MARTIN

025

MARVEL

PREVIOUSLY IN NEW AVENGERS

YOU'RE USED TO DEALING WITH HEROES...BUT WHAT YOU DON'T HAVE MUCH EXPERIENCE WITH IS ***KINGS.***

THEY EXIST ABOVE OTHER MEN, THEIR VERY IDEA OF MORALITY IS DIFFERENT THAN WHAT YOU ARE USED TO. LIKE GODS, THEY ARE EXPECTED TO COMMIT MURDER SO PEOPLE CAN SLEEP AT NIGHT KNOWING THEY ARE PROTECTED.

YOU'VE UNDERESTIMATED WHAT YOU'RE DEALING WITH, BUT THERE IS ***SOME*** GOOD NEWS...

I COULD BE A KING.

EIGHT MONTHS LATER

YOU KNOW, BLACK PANTHER, I WOKE UP THIS MORNING AND JUST KNEW I WAS GOING TO CATCH ME A VERY BIG FISH. AND HERE'S THE WARDEN COME TO PUT YOU IN YOUR PLACE.

THEY GAVE US YOUR CITY, YOU THINK THE PEOPLE WHO RULE THIS WORLD WOULDN'T LIE EVERY SINGLE TIME ABOUT WHO IS, AND WHO IS NOT, OFF-WORLD DURING AN EVENT?

YOU KNOW HOW LITTLE THESE PEOPLE CAN BE TRUSTED. YOU KNOW HOW LITTLE THEY MATTER.

ALL THAT REMAINS OF WAKANDA IS ASH AND RUBBLE. SEE, BROTHER...IT'S ***ALL*** NECROPOLIS NOW.

A KINGDOM OF NOTHING BUT THE DEAD. I CAN TRUST YOU TO FINISH THIS?

I WILL SEE YOU SOON, SHURI.

AMADEUS CHO. WHERE ARE THE ILLUMINATI HIDING? TONY STARK?

NO ONE KNOWS--HE'S DISAPPEARED.

PYM? BRADDOCK, STRANGE, "DOC GREEN"? MCCOY, T'CHALLA, BLACK BOLT?

YOU KNOW WE'RE TRYING TO ***SAVE*** ALL OF YOU, RIGHT?

WHERE IS REED RICHARDS, CHO? WHERE IS ***MY HUSBAND?***

THE ILLUMINATI

BLACK BOLT
Celestial Messiah

REED RICHARDS
Universal Builder

YELLOWJACKET
Size-Shifting Scientist

BEAST
Mutant Genius

DOCTOR STRANGE
Sorcerer Supreme

BLACK PANTHER
King of the Dead

THE HULK/
"DOC GREEN"
Strongest There Is

CAPTAIN BRITAIN
Multiverse Protector

AMADEUS CHO
Mathematics Wunderkind

IRON MAN
Master of Machines

"What Happened When The World Woke Up"

WRITER: JONATHAN HICKMAN

ARTIST: KEV WALKER

COLOR ARTISTS: FRANK MARTIN & DAVID CURIEL

LETTERER: VC's JOE CARAMAGNA

COVER ART: BUTCH GUICE & MATTHEW WILSON

VARIANT COVER ART: KEVIN NOWLAN

ASSISTANT EDITOR: JAKE THOMAS

EDITORS: TOM BREVOORT with WIL MOSS

EDITOR IN CHIEF: AXEL ALONSO

CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER: JOE QUESADA

PUBLISHER: DAN BUCKLEY

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: ALAN FINE

© 2014 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. WWW.MARVEL.COM

DAY ONE.

I THINK WE'VE LOST OUR WAY.

ALL WE NEED IS A LITTLE LIGHT.

ANY LUCK ON THAT FRONT, HENRY? TIME'S A FACTOR.

I THINK SO...

AND YOU CAN'T RUSH GREATNESS, REED. WITHOUT PATIE--

BZZZ!

AH! THERE. THAT SHOULD DO IT.

TRY IT NOW.

HERE GOES.

CLANG!

HRMPT!

HOW'D YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THIS PLACE?

31

MY FATHER TOLD ME.

HE USED TO WORK HERE FOR A WHILE WITH HOWARD STARK.

SOME SECRET-SOCIETY, CLANDESTINE JOB WITH THE UNSEEN ARCHITECTS OF HISTORY. APPARENTLY, TO HEAR HIM TELL IT, ONE OF THEIR JOB DESCRIPTIONS WAS "ASSISTING THE ORDERLY DEMISE OF THE WORLD."

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, THIS MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN SUCH A GOOD IDEA...

OR MAYBE IT'S PERFECT.

"OH, WE BROTHERS OF ABYSS. LOST SOULS WHO LIGHT THE FALL. DOWN TO THE DEPTHS OF OUR WELL-EARNED HELL."

NICE.

BYRON?

NO...

BRADDOCK.

THE PERIMETER'S SECURE. NO ONE'S GETTING IN HERE.

IS THAT ANOTHER WAY OF SAYING THAT WE'RE LOCKED IN?

I'M THE LAST CAPTAIN BRITAIN LEFT, REED. I'VE LEARNED NOT TO TAKE RISKS THAT I DON'T HAVE TO--WHAT'S IN HERE IS TOO IMPORTANT TO LOSE. SO...

YES, WE'RE LOCKED IN.

ENGAGING THE COMM SYSTEM. HOW MUCH TIME DO WE HAVE LEFT ON THE CLOCK?

BECAUSE I'M NOT SURE WE HAVE TIME TO CLOAK THE SIGNAL.

WE DON'T-- HE SHOULD BE INSIDE IN THE NEXT FEW MINUTES.

HOWEVER, IT'S NEW YORK, SO HE'LL BE SCATTERING DATA OFF HUNDREDS OF NODES.

HE'LL STILL BE AT RISK...BUT WE WON'T BE A FACTOR.

MANHATTAN

LOCKING ON NOW.

S.H.I.E.L.D. STATION: GOLGOTHA

SGPS HAS A FIX. TRIANGULATING...

HE'S INSIDE ALREADY.

STARK'S LAB

CONNECTING BIOPACKAGE NOW...

WE SHOULD HAVE AUDIO IN THREE...TWO...

CONNECTED.

YOU'RE ACTIVE, CHO.

WE'RE READY WHEN YOU ARE.

I'M IN THE LAB. DATA LOOKS INTACT.

WE MAY HAVE LOST STARK, BUT WE'LL STILL HAVE ACCESS TO ALL HIS STUFF. COULD BE FUN TO TINKER WITH.

YOU READY TO RECEIVE?

SEND IT NOW.

BE-DOOP

HENRY, ARE WE GETTING IT?

WE'RE GOOD. SIGNAL'S STABLE.

ANY OTHER PROBLEMS?

NO. IT'S ALL QUIET HERE. A BIT **TOO QUIET...**

€%#@! NOW PROJECTING A PRETTY HIGH PROBABILITY THAT I'M TOAST.

ARE YOU SURE?

YEAH...BUT THE DATA'S ALMOST UPLOADED. ONCE THAT'S DONE, THEN I CAN JUMP OUT OF HERE...

HOPEFULLY THE FASCISTS ARE RUNNING A LITTLE SLOW TODAY.

OH, NO...

S.H.I.E.L.D. HELICARRIERS ON SITE.

TRANSFER COMPLETE, REED.

JUMP OUT. NOW!

CAN'T. TRANSLOCATOR ISN'T WORKING. THEY MUST'VE ERECTED A NULL FIELD...I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE UNLESS I GET OUTSIDE ITS RANGE.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

NO CHOICE, REALLY...

CHANGE THE--

DAMN.

THEY HAVE HIM.

NO SIGNAL

DAY TWO.

OKAY. IT'S CONNECTED.

ANYONE CARE TO EXPLAIN TO ME WHY WE DON'T JUST TRY TO CONTACT CHO THE WAY WE DID EARLIER?

THE HUNTED MUST ALWAYS BE MORE CAUTIOUS THAN THE HUNTER, CAPTAIN.

TO SAY NOTHING OF THE FACT THAT HE'S PROBABLY BEING DETAINED IN A S.H.I.E.L.D. BLACK BOX FACILITY...BUT WE CAN'T BE SURE, CAN WE?

OH. AND THAT COMMUNICATION GEAR HE WAS WEARING EARLIER? MOST LIKELY CONFISCATED.

BUT IT'S WORSE THAN THAT...

S.H.I.E.L.D.'S GOTTEN INCREDIBLY AGGRESSIVE.

IT WAS BAD ENOUGH WHEN THEIR PSI-AGENTS STARTED RUNNING GLOBAL SWEEPS FOR OUR BRAIN SIGNATURES, BUT IN THE LAST COUPLE MONTHS, THEY'VE SYSTEMICALLY ATTACKED AND CRIPPLED EVERY TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE WE'D PREVIOUSLY ENJOYED.

WHY DO YOU THINK WE JUST STARTED TRAVELING COACH, CAPTAIN? THREE WEEKS AGO, THEY CRACKED OUR TRANSLOCATING ABILITY--WE JUMP SOMEWHERE AND THEY'LL TRIANGULATE THAT SIGNAL AND BE ON TOP OF US FASTER THAN WE CAN SET UP OUR MOBILE LAB.

HOW DO YOU EXPECT THAT ALL THIS COULD POSSIBLY WORK?

WELL, CAPTAIN, THEY'RE SMART...

BUT THEY'RE NOT *THAT* SMART.

YOU KNOW THE IMPLANT I GAVE YOU MONTHS AGO WHEN YOU JOINED US?

OF COURSE.

YOU SAID IT WAS NECESSARY--THAT YOU ALL HAD THEM.

CORRECT. AND WHILE ITS PRIMARY FUNCTION IS DISTORTING OUR BRAIN SIGNATURES TO EVADE DETECTION, IT ALSO HAPPENS TO BE THE MOST ADVANCED TRACKING/RECORDING SYSTEM EVER INVENTED.

BY A HUMAN.

THAT'S TRUE. THANK YOU, HENRY.

ALWAYS SOMETHING NEW TO STRIVE FOR.

REGARDLESS...THOUGH IT WAS NOT CONSTRUCTED FOR THIS EXACT USE, IN THEORY, THIS DEVICE CAN BE ACCESSED REMOTELY AND GIVE US ACCESS TO A...LIVE FEED OF WHAT CHO IS EXPERIENCING.

THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO *DETECT* THAT?

THE DEVICE ALGORITHMICALLY HOPS MODES AND FREQUENCIES THOUSANDS OF TIMES A MILLISECOND. UNLESS YOU KNOW THE PARAMETERS, THE DEVICE IS UNDETECTABLE.

OUR *ACCESS* OF THE DEVICE... THAT'S A LITTLE MORE TRICKY. MOST S.H.I.E.L.D. FACILITIES ARE HARD-SHIELDED AGAINST SUCH ATTEMPTS OF THIS NATURE...

BUT I THINK, BY BOUNCING--AND AMPLIFYING--THE SIGNAL THROUGH THE PLANET'S DESCENDENT CORE, I MIGHT BE...

AH!

HELLO, AMADEUS.

GOOD TO SEE YOU.

IT WORKED.

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

NOW?

NOW WE WAIT FOR THEM TO GIVE US SOMETHING.

FOUR HOURS LATER.

LOOK...IT'S NOT LIKE I'M ASKING TO SPEAK TO MY LAWYER OR ANYTHING CRAZY LIKE THAT.

I MEAN, I'M DUMB, BUT I'M NOT *THAT* DUMB...

I'M JUST LOOKING FOR SOMETHING LIKE MAYBE A PB&J...

OR REALLY *ANY* CONSUMABLE BELONGING TO THE SANDWICH FAMILY.

THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT? A SANDWICH?

THAT'S ALL IT'S GOING TO TAKE TO SHUT YOU UP?

PLEASE, DEAR GOD, GIVE HIM A SANDWICH.

YEAH.

BUT I'M PARTICULAR, SO I'M GONNA NEED YOU TO CUT THE CRUST OFF.

AND THEN, WHEN YOU'VE DONE THAT, I WANT YOU TO TAKE THAT SANDWICH AND SHOVE IT STRAIGHT UP YOUR--

AGENT, THAT'S ENOUGH.

WELL, ISN'T *THIS* INTERESTING?

HMM.

YOU CAN ALL GO.

I'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.

HELLO, AMADEUS.

I'M SUSAN RICHARDS. I'LL BE YOUR INTERROGATOR.

WE'VE MET. AND EVEN IF WE HADN'T...I'VE SEEN YOUR PICTURES.

I BELIEVE WE HAVE SOME OF THE SAME ACQUAINTANCES.

UH-HUH. IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN GET YOU BEFORE WE GET STARTED?

WELL, I'M JUST *DYING* FOR A SANDWICH.

I'M AFRAID WE'VE RUN OUT.

FIGURES. SPEND BILLIONS AND BILLIONS OF DOLLARS BUILDING FLOATING WEAPONS PLATFORMS AND REALLY, REALLY NICE JAILS, AND THEN SCRIMP ON DINNER.

SOUNDS EXACTLY LIKE THE GOVERNMENT.

YOU WORRIED ABOUT HOW YOUR HARD-EARNED TAXES ARE BEING SPENT?

IT'S HILARIOUS YOU THINK I PAY TAXES.

I AM ABSOLUTELY NOT SURPRISED YOU THINK YOU'RE ABOVE THE LAW.

OH, WHAT YOU CALL THE ***LAW***, I CALL THE ***SUBJUGAT--***

HERE'S THE THING: I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING, AND I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING IS ***WRONG***. I KNOW IT FOR A FACT. AND WE'RE GOING TO SIT IN THIS ROOM UNTIL YOU GIVE ME WHAT I NEED.

OH, YOU KNOW THINGS, HUH?

DID YOU ***KNOW*** THAT ONLY FOUR PERCENT OF PEOPLE THINK THEY HAVE A BELOW-AVERAGE INTELLIGENCE? FOUR PERCENT.

AND WERE YOU ALSO AWARE THAT TESTS SHOW THERE IS A DIRECT CORRELATION BETWEEN LACK OF INTELLIGENCE AND ASSUREDNESS? WHEN YOU HEAR SOMEONE SAY THEY KNOW SOMETHING "FOR A FACT"-- PICTURE THEM WITH A SIGN AROUND THEIR NECK THAT SAYS, "I'M AN IDIOT."

PRESENT COMPANY EXCLUDED, OF COURSE. BUT STILL... IT'S SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT.

WELL, WE'RE TALKING ABOUT ***YOU***, AMADEUS, AND I JUST SO HAPPEN TO HAVE A YOUR S.H.I.E.L.D.-PROCURED TEST SCORES RIGHT HERE.

AND SURPRISING NO ONE, YOU DO NOT HAVE BELOW-AVERAGE INTELLIGENCE. THIS IS, IN FACT, A FACT.

LET'S SAY, HYPOTHETICALLY, THAT THERE WAS THIS PERSON WHO TESTED OUT IN THE TOP FIVE PERCENT ON ALL THE STANDARD I.Q. EXAMS. ACROSS THE BOARD. CONSISTENTLY.

NOW, YOU MIGHT ARGUE THAT THIS IS, CLEARLY, A VERY SMART, VERY SPECIAL PERSON. BUT I'D BE WILLING TO BET ALL THE MONEY IN MY POCKET AGAINST ALL THE SANDWICHES IN YOURS THAT THIS PERSON WOULD TELL YOU THAT YOU ARE WRONG.

DO YOU KNOW WHY?

WHY?

BECAUSE THIS PERSON WOULD KNOW THAT BEING IN THE TOP FIVE PERCENT STILL MEANS THAT THERE ARE **250 MILLION** OTHER PEOPLE OUT THERE AT LEAST AS SMART AS HE IS.

ONE OF 250 MILLION. WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT THAT?

NOTHING. NOT A THING.

YES, BUT THAT STORY DOESN'T REALLY APPLY TO YOU...

AFTER ALL, YOU'RE ONE OF THE TEN SMARTEST HUMANS ON THE PLANET EARTH, AREN'T YOU?

THE POINT OF THE STORY IS, I KNOW PEOPLE WHO ARE SMARTER.

SO DO I. BETTER THAN YOU EVER WILL. MAYBE BETTER THAN I KNOW MYSELF.

WANT TO KNOW WHAT ELSE I KNOW?

SMASH

I AM GOING TO CATCH ALL OF YOU.

ESPECIALLY MY HUSBAND.

AND WHAT IF HE TOLD YOU HE KNEW WHAT HE WAS DOING.

WHAT WOULD YOU TELL HIM THEN?

I'D TELL HIM I'VE HEARD IT ALL BEFORE... AND TO GET USED TO SLEEPING IN A CELL.

DAY THREE.

ANY LUCK?

ALMOST THERE.

HONESTLY, IF CHO HADN'T STUCK AROUND TO THE VERY END, THIS WOULDN'T HAVE WORKED--STARK'S ENCRYPTION IS SIMPLY TOO WELL DONE.

WELL, WHAT'S THE WORD? DID CHO FALL ON HIS SWORD FOR A GOOD CAUSE, OR DOES THE GRAIL ELUDE US?

I'M IN.

WE MAY HAVE LOST STARK--

HE'S NOT LOST.

WE JUST HAVEN'T FOUND HIM YET.

EITHER WAY, WE'VE FINALLY GOT OUR HANDS ON HIS DATA.

DE-DOOP

WHAT AM I LOOKING AT?

PYM?

TOGETHER, TONY AND I ENACTED SEVERAL... ***CONTINGENCY PLANS*** WHEN WE FIRST LEARNED OF WHAT WE WERE FACING. YOU KNOW ABOUT SOME OF THOSE:

THE AVENGERS MACHINE, THE EXPLORER PROTOCOLS, OTHER, LESS PRACTICAL IDEAS...

YES. AND THEN BEYOND THAT, THERE WERE THE THINGS WE CREATED INDIVIDUALLY. TONY-- HE BUILT WEAPONS-- AND HE BUILT THEM WELL.

THIS IS ***SOL'S HAMMER.***

HOW MANY FILES ARE THERE?

WELL, THEY'RE NOT ALL RELEVANT. THERE APPEARS TO BE A DATABASE OF PHONE NUMBERS AND A TRULY SKETCHY SCORING SYSTEM, CORPORATE HOLDINGS, BANK ACCOUNTS...

BUT AT FIRST GLANCE, THE WEAPONS FILES APPEAR TO BE...ROBUST.

I'M COUNTING ***SIX HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THREE*** SEPARATE DESIGNS.

SEE...THIS IS WHY EVERYONE THINKS YOU PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS UP TO SOMETHING.

BECAUSE YOU ARE.

OKAY. WE NEED TO CATALO--

HOLD ON! EMERGENCY TRANSMISSION.

IT'S T'CHALLA.

REED! ARE YOU THERE? WE'RE COMING IN HOT.

HOT? YOU MEAN...

YES. TRANSLOCATING.

YOU KNOW THEY CAN TRACK THAT NOW. IT TAKES THEM A FEW HOURS, BUT THEY HAVE THE CAPABILITY.

I KNOW, BUT WE HAVE TO RISK IT.

SO... FAILURE.

MORE. BETRAYAL.

I'LL TELL THE OTHERS TO PACK. BE SAFE, MY FRIEND.

OKAY, YOU HEARD THE MAN.

WE'RE MOBILE IN UNDER AN HOUR.

BEAST, CAN YOU PLEASE...

ALREADY ON IT, REED. ANY PARTICULAR MESSAGE?

JUST MAKE SURE YOU EMBED THE CODE.

IT'S TIME WE GOT BETTER INTEL.

IS THERE A PARTICULAR TYPE OF PHRA--

INCOMING!

FWAASSHHH!

WHAT HAPPENED?

WE LOST IT ALL. THE GOLDEN CITY HAS CRUMBLED.

WAKANDA IS GONE.

Zone